THE PLAUSIBLE ARGUMENTS OF A Romiſh Prieſt

Anſwered from

SCRIPTURE

BY AN

Engliſh Proteſtant.

Seaſonable and Uſeful for all Proteſtant Families.

Licenſed,

May 24 1686.

LONDON,

Printed for *R. Clavell*, at the Sign of the *Peacock* in *S. Pauls* Church-yard, 1688.

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TO THE READER.

IN the following Dialogue (*though not All, yet*) *the most Material Points wherein the* Roman *Church differs from the Church of* England, *are briefly and plainly discoursed: So that while by their little* Tracts *and short* Catechisms, *daily Printed and sent abroad, the* Romish Emissaries *do labour to seduce the Weaker sort of* Protestants, *They may be provided with short and satisfactory Answers to their most usual Fallacies. Their Assaults are generally in the Dark, and because it is impossible always to stand by those particular Persons whom they labour to Draw in, it is*

thought fit to publiſh this little Manual, *to enable thoſe that are Attacked readily to defend themſelves: To which end the* Holy Scripture *is here recommended as the beſt* Touch-Stone *to juſtifie our Doctrines, and diſcover their Corruptions; And the more their Guilt makes them fly from it, the more our Sincerity ſhould make us cleave to it. For this is in every* Proteſtants *Hand; and there are ſo many and ſo plain Places of it which condemn the Opinions and Practices of the* Roman Church, *that it requires no great Skill nor Art to diſcern how different they are from* Gods Word; *And all the Learning and Artifice of their greateſt Doctors will not be able to hide it from a plain and honeſt Enquirer, that will take but the Pains to read this Divine, Unalterable, Univerſally re-*

ceived, and Infallible Book of God *I know they pretend (especially to the Unlearned), That all* Antiquity *is clearly for them; but it is best for those who are not Read in Ancient Authors, to leave that Province to the* Clergy *of the* Church of England, *who have hitherto always worsted them at that Weapon also. And since we can prove both by* Scripture *and* Antiquity, *That all their Additional* Articles of Faith *are False and Erroneous; and yet they do acknowledge all those* Articles of Faith *which we hold as necessary to Salvation, to be true: Doubtless, Ours must be the safer* Religion, *in which both Sides do agree. Again The plain Words of* Holy Scripture *prove Our Religion; but all those Points wherein they differ from us, cannot be proved but by pretended* Traditions;

ſome of which are expreſly contrary to Gods Written Word. *The* Scripture *was not made by us, but by the* GOD of Truth; *and it is owned not by us alone, but by them and all Chriſtians to be the* Word *and* Will of God, *and this is clearly on Our Side: But thoſe* Traditions *which they fly to for their Evidence, are of their own Making, and in their own Keeping; No other* Chriſtians *do allow them, and We have nothing but their own Word in their own Cauſe, to prove them to be Genuine: Which being the Caſe, I hope none will ever be perſwaded to leave a certain, plain and evident* Religion *of Gods own preſcribing, for an uncertain, obſcure and Ill-proved* Religion, *which is no more but a meer* Human Invention, *as the enſuing Pages will more fully declare.*

THE

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A DIALOGUE BETWEEN A Popish Priest, AND A PROTESTANT OF THE Church of *England*.

Popish Priest. What Religion are you of?

Protestant. * Of the same that Christ and his Apostles taught, which is professed by the Church of *England*, whereof I am a Member.

* The Religion of the Church of *England*, taught by Christ and his Apostles.

Po. How do you know, that the Religion you profess is the same that was taught by Christ and his Apostles?

Prot. By the Scriptures which they left behind them.

Po. How can you tell, whether they writ and left that Book behind them or no?

Prot. The Book is worthy of such Authors, and all Christians (though they differ in other things) agree in this, nor dare you deny it.

Po. We do not deny it, only we say, you ought to confess you received this Book from the Roman Church, and must learn the meaning of it from Her.

Prot. This Book hath been preserved in all Christian Churches; but we received it from those good Protestants who translated it into *English*; whereas your Priests (as I am informed) kept it in *Latin*, and withheld it from such plain Men as my self, while they had power here.

The Scriptures in an unknown Tongue.

Po. Though they did so, it was only for fear you should wrest the Scripture to your own destruction, 2 Pet. iii. 16.

Prot. That danger is only in some places hard to be understood, and which I may safely be ignorant of: But in all things necessary to Salvation, it is so plain as to give understanding to the Simple, *Psal.* cxix. 130. Wherefore I rather think they concealed it all from us, to keep us from seeing their Errors;

 because

becauſe the more I read it, the leſs I like your Religion.

Po. **Is it not a ſtrange Preſumption in you (that are but a Lay-man) to read that which you cannot rightly underſtand?**

Prot. It is no preſumption to obey the Command of Chriſt, who bids us *Search the Scriptures, John* v. 39. and declaring the not knowing them to be the cauſe of Error, *Math.* xxii. 29. And the *Beræans* are commended for examining the Apoſtles Doctrin by Scripture, *Acts* xvii. 11. Now ſurely, if we have Commands and Examples of Reading the Scripture, it muſt be ſuppoſed we can in ſome meaſure underſtand it.

Po. **Well, you read that Chriſt will be with his Church to the end of the World**, Math. xxviii. 20. **and therefore you ought to believe the Catholic Church can only give you the true ſenſe of Scripture.**

Prot. I do believe this, and am a Member of this Catholic Church, being rightly baptized into it, and holding the ſame Creeds which were anciently and univerſally believed in it; ſo that I am as likely to come to know the true ſenſe of Scripture, as any others.

Po. **Not ſo, by your favour, for you are no Member of the** Roman **Church, which I will prove to be that Catholic Church mentioned in the Creeds; and then it muſt follow that you neither have the true ſenſe**

The pretended Roman Catholic Church.

of Scripture, nor can you be ſaved out of this Catholic Church.

Prot. I ſhall yield your Conſequences when you prove the Antecedent; but then you muſt not take it for granted without any Proof, as your Prieſts uſe to do.

Po. **I do not think it needs much Proof, for it is as viſible as that the Sun is in the Firmament.**

Prot. That cannot be, for no body doth or can deny this; but the far greater part of Chriſtians utterly deny the *Roman* Church to be the Catholic Church, yea, and ſay it is Non-ſenſe to affirm a part to be the whole, or a particular to be univerſal: And it muſt be well proved from Scripture (which all Chriſtians agree to be Gods Word) before I can be perſuaded that Chriſt (who died for his whole Church) will ſuffer three parts of four of thoſe which he redeemed, to be damned for not believing this Opinion, as you moſt uncharitably affirm.

St. *Peter's* Superiority and Juriſdiction over the reſt of the Apoſtles.

Po. **Well, for your ſatisfaction I will undertake to prove, that S.** Peter **was the chief of the Apoſtles; and that Chriſt gave him the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and built his Church on him as on a Rock; and that the Biſhop of** Rome **is S.** Peters **Succeſſor, and Head of that Church which Chriſt promiſed to lead into all truth; and then you muſt confeſs the** Roman **Church to be that Catholic Church**

Church which is mentioned in the Creeds.

Prot. I hope you will give me leave to hear and examine your Proofs, and on that condition pray proceed.

Po. **Do not the Scriptures, naming S. Peter in the first place, shew he was the chief of the Apostles?**

Prot. This shews he was an Eminent Apostle, but cannot imply any Superiority over the rest, because Christ makes them all equal Judges sitting together upon twelve Thrones, *Matth.* xix. 28. and forbids any of them to pretend any Superiority over the others; and though there was one Emperor then over many lesser and inferiour Princes, Christ saith, *It shall not be so among his Apostles, Matth.* xx. 26. *Luke* xxii. 26. Nor would *S. James* have finally determined in the Council of *Jerusalem* in St. *Peters* presence, *Acts* xv. 13. or St. *Paul* have so openly opposed and reproved him, if Christ had made him Superiour over all the Apostles, *Galat.* ii. 11, 14.

Po. **Do you not read, that Christ gave to him first and singly the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and promised to build his Church on him, as on a Rock so firm, that the Gates of Hell should never prevail against it?** Matth. xvi. 18, 19.

Prot. I read, that Christ in that place of *Matth.* xvi. 19. did not give, but only promise

to give him those Keys afterwards; which Promise he made also to all the Apostles, *Math.* xviii. 18. and when he came to perform it, he gave the power of the Keys to them all alike, *John* xx. 22, 23. And it was upon S. *Peters* Confession of Faith that Christ built his Church, not upon his Person, since we see the Gates of Hell immediately prevailed too far against him, first in his labouring to tempt Christ not to suffer, *Math.* xvi. 22. and secondly, in his denying him with many Imprecations, *Math.* xxvi. 24. But if I should grant all the Priviledges you heap on S. *Peter*, without any good Evidence from Gods Word, that will not prove the Popes sole right to them all.

The Popes Supremacy.

Po. **Yes, without doubt: for the Bishop of** Rome **is certainly the Successor of** S. Peter, **and consequently the Vicar of Christ, and supream Head of the Catholic Church.**

Prot. The Bishop of *Antioch* hath a better Title to be S. *Peters* Successor, because the Scripture (which never mentions his being at *Rome*) says expresly, he was there: but if the Bishop of *Rome* had been S. *Peters* Successor, that could not make him Head of the whole Catholic Church, because S. *Peter* himself never pretended to any such Power or Title: yea, he was peculiarly the Apostle of the believing *Jews*, who had been Circumcised, *Galat.* ii. 7. and to them he writes:

Nor

Nor doth Christ any where tell us, he would leave one such Head on Earth, or give any Orders to all Christians to obey any one Apostle.

Po. **But we do believe the Bishop of** Rome **to be S.** Peters **Successor, and if so, how can our Lord make good his Promise to be with his Church to the end of the World, if he do not make S.** Peters **Successor as infallible as S.** Peter **himself was by his presence and assistance?** The Pope's Infallibility.

Prot. If we grant an inspired Apostle to have been Infallible in order to setling the Faith, and writing the Rule of it, it doth not follow that his uninspired Successors should have this Priviledge, now the Faith and Rule of it are fixed. For then the Bishops of *Antioch*, *Jerusalem* and *Alexandria*, must be Infallible now: And Christs Promise is not made to S. *Peter*, or to any particular Apostle, but to the whole Catholic Church; so that as long as the true Faith is held in any one or more Churches, Christs Promise is made good, though other particular Churches fall away.

Po. **But the Catholic Church in the Creed is an Apostolical Church, and it was promised to the Apostles, that he would lead them into all truth,** John xvi. 13. **which Priviledge belongs to** Rome, **as being now the only free Apostolical Church in the World.**

Prot. All Churches in the World at first were planted immediately, or mediately, by the Apoſtles; and Chriſt did certainly make this Promiſe good to his Apoſtles, who were led into all Truth; and ſo long as any particular Church keeps cloſe to this Truth which the Apoſtles taught, the Promiſe is ſtill made good to that Church; and there were many particular Apoſtolical Churches under Pagan Emperors, and may be now under the *Turks*; it being not temporal Freedom, but adhering to the Apoſtles Doctrin which makes a particular Church Apoſtolical, and made the whole Catholic Church to be called ſo at firſt, when the Creed was made.

Implicit Faith; or Believing as the Church Believes.

Po. **However, you muſt grant it is moſt prudent to take the beſt way to come to the knowledge of the Truth: Now it is both the eaſieſt and certaineſt way for the People to come to this knowledge by believing as the Church believes.**

Prot. It is neither ſo eaſie nor ſo certain a way, as to ſearch the Scriptures.

Po. **This is a ſtrange Aſſertion! Is it not eaſier to let your Paſtors (who are fitted for it by their Profeſſion) judge of matters of Faith, then for you to take pains to find them out in Scripture?**

Prot. My Aſſertion is not ſo ſtrange as true: For it is much more difficult for ſuch a Man as I am, to know what theſe Paſtors have

have judged about these Matters, than to know what the Scripture saith of them.

Po. **Have not Councils set this down? And is not the Pope always ready to declare the Churches true Sense?**

Prot. But how can I know which are lawful Councils, or what they have determined? or if I did know the Words, and doubted of the Sense, it would be very hard for me to get the Pope to tell me in words or writing what it was; and if the Pope did this, he cannot speak or write plainer than God hath done in holy Scripture, and therefore (I am told) there is as much difference among you about the Sense of Councils and Popes, as there is among us about the Sense of Scripture.

Po. **Well, but your own Catholic Bishop or Priest, can tell you the true meaning of both Councils and Popes in all these matters.**

Prot. So can our Protestant Bishops and Priests tell us the true meaning of Scripture: But if you be forced to resort at last to particular fallible Men for the certainty of your Faith; why do you boast of a better way to be infallibly assured of the Truth, than Protestants can ever have, and upon that false ground urge Men to come over to your Church?

Po. **Because we rely upon that * Oral Tradition which hath been delivered down through**

*Oral Tradition; or the Faith delivered down by Word of Mouth from Age to Age.

through all Ages in the Roman **Church, and can never fail, ſo long as we have living Witneſſes to declare it; and is not this certainer than a dead written Rule, that may be interpreted as every Man pleaſes?**

Prot. No ſure, for all Men put things of greateſt concern in Writing; and do not truſt things for Poſterity, to be told by word of Mouth. A written Rule ſays always the ſame words, and can have no ends upon us: but your living Witneſſes by forgetfulneſs, or to ſerve their Pride and Covetouſneſs, may deliver Tradition variouſly: And you have no Evidence that thoſe things are Apoſtolical Traditions, which your Church ſays are ſo; but either ancient Writings, which are of far leſs credit than Scripture, (and then alſo you muſt ſuppoſe thoſe ancient Writings to be more evident than your Traditions, becauſe you prove theſe by them) or elſe you muſt truſt to fallible Men, whoſe Intereſt it may be, and is, to deceive you; and thus your preſent living Witneſſes bear ſole Teſtimony to themſelves, which is very ſuſpicious at the beſt: So that your way is neither certainer nor eaſier than ours.

Po. **I know not what your way is, unleſs you make every private Man to be judge of Scripture; when that declares,** The People muſt enquire the Law from the Prieſts Mouth, *Malach.* ii. 7. **And Commands**

mands us to obey them that are over us in the Lord, *Heb.* xiii. 17. affirming, that no Scripture is of any private Interpretation, 2 *Pet.* i. 20.

Prot. Our way is to read diligently, and pray heartily to be directed; and if we doubt, then to go to our Proteſtant Biſhops and Prieſts (for they, and not our Clergy, are over us in the Lord) and they are as able, as willing, and of as great Integrity as any among you, to give us Satisfaction. And though we do not pretend that every private Man may interpret difficult Places, without the advice of his Paſtor; Yet you are miſtaken in your Interpretation of that Place of *S. Peter*, 2 *Pet.* i. 20. Where the Apoſtle is proving the Scripture is a ſure Rule, becauſe it was not written or firſt interpreted by any private Mans Will or Fancy, but the Authors ſpake by the Holy Ghoſt, and according to the Will of God: Which is nothing to your purpoſe.

Po. **However, it ſeems you are forced to rely on theſe Prieſts of yours, for the true meaning of Scripture, and the final certainty of your Faith, and yet you call this a ſlaviſh thing in Catholics.**

Prot. Our Prieſts do not barely tell us, this or that is the Senſe of Scripture, and then forbid us all further enquiry, which would really be an enſlaving of their People: But they compare one Scripture with another,

and

and give us ſound and ſolid Reaſons for all their Expoſitions, deſiring us no further to believe them, than the clearneſs of their evidence deſerves, and this allows us the freedom of rational Beings.

Po. **But is it not contrary to Scripture and Reaſon both, that the People ſhould judge of their Paſtors Proofs and Declarations?**

Prot. It is not contrary to Scripture; for there all Chriſtians are expreſly commanded, *To prove all things, and hold faſt that which is good*, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 21. and *to try the Spirits*, 1 *John* iv. 1. St. *Paul* bids the *Corinthians judge what he ſaid*, 1 *Cor.* x. 15. and likes thoſe who tried his Declarations by the Scripture, *Acts* xvii. 11. So that no doubt, God will expect Men ſhall have ſomething more to ſay for that Faith on which they truſt their Souls, than that their Prieſt barely affirmed that it was true.

Po. **Is not the Prieſt judge of the People? and can it be reaſonable then that they ſhould be his Judges?** *Deut.* xvii. 9.

Prot. We do not pretend to judge our Prieſts, but only to uſe our Reaſon, (which God gave us not in vain) in judging meerly for our ſelves; becauſe we read that every Man ſhall bear his own burthen, and therefore every Man muſt prove his own Work, *Galat.* vi. 4, 5. and this gives us not any power over either our Prieſts or Fellow Chriſtians; 'tis no judgment of direction for others, but only

only a judgment of Discretion, which to strip us of, is to degrade us into the rank of Brutes.

Po. **Well, though you seem fond of your own way, yet even the good effects of our Method may convince any impartial Man it is better; for do you not see how quiet and unanimous we are, by our Peoples intire relyance on their Pastors?**

Prot, This may prove it a cunninger, but not a safer Method; The Turks are as unanimous as they are in your Church, but they may thank Ignorance and Severities for it: And for our parts we envy not their Happiness, who have found out a way (not prescribed by Christ) to live peaceably in gross Errors, and to be unanimous in their Mistakes.

Po. **I know you aim at our Church, and wonder how such a Man as you dare charge the Roman Church with gross Errors and Mistakes?**

Prot. Because I can make my Charge good; For if Scripture be the Rule of what we ought to believe and practise, then your kneeling and praying before Images, your Invocation of Angels and Saints, adoring Relicks, praying in an unknown Tongue, Transubstantiation, Half Communion, Auricular Confession, Indulgences, and your Doctrin of Purgatory (with divers others which I can name) are gross Errors and Corruptions believed and practised in the Roman Church.

The Church of *Rome* full of gross Errors.

Po.

Po. **You are very bold! But I doubt not to justifie all these Opinions and Practices, and to convince you so fully of the truth and innocency of them, that I hope you will own your mistake, and embrace those very things which you so rashly censure, therefore let us discourse the particulars.**

Image Worship.

Prot. I can never be perſuaded to kneel down and pray before an Image, to offer up Incenſe and Gifts to it: Since I read in Scripture, we muſt not bow down to them nor worſhip them, *Exod.* xx. 4, 5. and find Idolatry ſo grievouſly condemned there.

Po. **I confeſs the Scripture condemns Idolatry; but ſure you cannot be ſo weak to think we take the Image for our God, as Heathens did.**

Prot. We cannot ſee your Thoughts; but you do all thoſe Acts before your Images, which Heathens did before theirs; and (I am told) they excuſed themſelves as you do, by ſaying they did not take the Image for their God, yet all Chriſtians count them flat Idolaters.

Po. **They were ſo, becauſe they worſhiped Images of falſe Gods; but you muſt not ſay we are ſo, becauſe ours are Images of the true God, and his Saints.**

Prot. They broke the Firſt Commandment in having other Gods, and you break the Second, which forbids the making any Image

Image to worſhip it, not excepting the Image of the true God, or of things in Heaven; ſo that this only proves your Idolatry is of another kind; not that it is no Idolatry at all. The Jews were as real Idolaters for worſhiping the Golden Calf, though they took it for a repreſentation of the true God, *Exod.* xxxii. 4, 5. as when they worſhiped *Baal-Peor*, *Numb.* xxv. 2.

Po. **Well, but we do not terminate any of our Worſhip on the Image, but on that which it repreſents; the Image only helps to raiſe up our Minds to the thing which is ſignified by it, and our Worſhip paſſes through the Image to that thing, which cannot be Idolatry.**

Prot. If it be an Image of the Saints which are Creatures, it is Idolatry to ask any thing of them which is in Gods Power to give, and ſo your Worſhip in that caſe ends in flat Idolatry: And if it be an Image of God or Jeſus Chriſt, that worſhip which you give their Images, and intend ſhall terminate on God, muſt be Divine Worſhip. For otherwiſe you cannot worſhip God or Chriſt, by worſhiping your Images.

Po. **But ſuppoſe our Church finds this way of Worſhip helps Devotion, may ſhe not command any Mode of Worſhip for ſo good an end?**

Prot. No, ſhe cannot command any Mode of Worſhip forbidden in Scripture upon no pre-

pretence whatever: And ſurely Chriſt and his Apoſtles knew what would help Devotion as well as your Church; but there is not in their Writings one word for this way of worſhiping God, and there is a plain Commandment againſt it; and if you would confeſs Truth, the Carving, Painting and Gilding of the Image, takes off your Thoughts from attending the matter of your Prayers, and ſo they hinder rather than help Devotion.

Po. **Is it any more Idolatry in our Church to command this, than in yours to enjoyn you to bow at the Name of Jeſus, and to bow to the Altar?**

Prot. There is ſome ſort of pretence from the Scripture, in *Phil.* ii. 10. for Bowing at the Name of JESUS; but you cannot ſhew any thing for Bowing to his Image, whilſt we ſhew a Command againſt it. And we do not bow to the Altar, but toward it, that is, we only look that way when we worſhip the true God, but have no viſible Repreſentation of him before us when we do this: And beſides, this Ceremony is left at liberty, ſo that none are bound to obſerve it.

Po. **But do we not reſpect the Image of our Prince or our Friend, for the ſake of thoſe they repreſent? and ought not all Chriſtians to reſpect the Images of Chriſt and his Saints for their ſakes?**

Prot.

Prot. We do not talk to these Pictures of our Prince or Friend, nor make Petitions to them, this would look like Madness: We do respect the Image of Christ, but that will not serve you, unless we fall down and worship it; but we must answer you, *We are to worship the Lord our God, and him only must we serve, Matth.* iv. 10.

Po. **I confess we cannot expect you should pray before the Images of Saints and Angels till we have convinced you of your Error in not praying to Angels and Saints, so that I shall now go on to prove, that it is lawful to call upon Angels to help us; for did not** Jacob **do so?** *Gen.* xlviii. 16. Invocation of Saints and Angels.

Prot. Pray read the place and you will find he prays only *to the Angel that redeemed him*: That is, to Christ, who appeared as an Angel often to the *Patriarchs* before his Incarnation, and is called the Angel of Gods presence, *Isai.* lxiii. 9. But the created Angels would not suffer St. *John* so much as to bow down to them, *Revel.* xix. 10. and *Chap.* xxii. 8. saying, that was a piece of worship due to God: Yea the pretended Humility of going not directly to God, but by the Mediation of Angels, is called a Deceit and plainly forbid by the Apostle, *Coloss.* ii. 18. And Christ hath Taught us to pray to his Father, if we want the assistance of his Angels, *Matth.* xxvi. 53.

Po. **Doth not your Bible tell you the Souls of the Martyrs under the Altar**

pray for us? *Revel.* vi. 9, 10. **And may we not then desire them to pray to God for us?**

Prot. Those Spirits only pray in general for the speedy coming of the Day of Judgment, and are bid to rest in quiet till then, *ver.* 11. But this is no ground for particular Men in distant places to ask particular things of them, as Health, Wealth, Peace, Protection; Yea Pardon, Grace and Glory, which none but God can give; Nor doth the Scripture any where declare we should ask these things of any other but God.

Po. **How dare you that are a Sinner whom God will not hear, John ix. 31. presume to ask these things directly of God himself, without desiring his Friends to pray for you?**

Prot. Though I am unworthy, yet I am commanded to pray, and to ask all that I need in Christs Name, and am promised if I do so, I shall be heard, *John.* xiv. 13, 14. And *Chap.* xvi. 23, 24. Yea I am told he is my Advocate, 1 *John.* ii. 2. And that there is but one Mediator between God and Man, 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. Now after all this, I think it is a greater presumption, without any Command, Direction or Promise, to make use of the Saints as our Advocates and Mediators; for it is to leave the way prescribed by God, and invent a new of our own; it is to take that Honour which belongs to the Son of God, and give it to his Servants, so that we may well

well believe it will disoblige him we pray to.

Po. **You do not consider that we hold, the Saints joyn their Intercession to that of Christ, and therefore to desire them to pray for us, can be no injury to Christ, whom we deny not to be our Mediator.**

Prot. It must suppose Christs Intercession not to be sufficient, to add so many other Mediators to him; Yea it seems you believe they have more power with God, or love for us, than Christ hath; otherwise you would not think it necessary to joyn their Prayers to his, nor make more Addresses to these Servants, than to the Son. We know as Christ is God, he is most able, and as Man, most willing to help us, *Hebr.* ii. 18. and are assured he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, *Hebr.* vii. 25. And when the Father hath provided so All-sufficient a Mediator, to fly to others, and desire them to add their Interest to his, is both ingratitude to the Father, and a disparagement to the Son, when you have laid all the fine colours on it you can.

Po. **I will convince you by a practice of your own, that herein you censure us unjustly: Do not you desire the Saints on Earth to pray for you, though Christ be your Mediator, and is this any injury to Christ? why then may we not as well desire those in Heaven to do it?**

Prot. We have many Precepts and Examples in Scripture to desire holy Men on Earth

to pray with us and for us, which shews that is according to Gods Will, 1 *John* v. 14. but you have not one word to direct you, to desire this of the Saints in Heaven. Besides, we do not kneel to good Men, and put their Names into the same Litanies and Prayers with God Almighty, nor desire to be heard by their Merits: They pray with us and for us, as our Fellow-sufferers, who see and hear our wants in particular, and pray only in Christs Name, and through his Merits, and so are joynt Petitioners with us, not joynt Mediators with Christ. And withal, every particular Man goes to them and tells them his Case, and then he is sure they know his Wants; but Scripture is very clear, that those who are dead, even the best Men, know not the particular Wants of their dearest Friends, 2 *Kings* xxii. 20. *Job* xiv. 2. *Eccles.* ix. 5. *Isai.* lxiii. 16. Nor is it possible for any Creature to hear the Petitions of many thousands at one time in divers places; and if they cannot hear you, what are you better for praying to them?

Po. This is easily answered; for since God knows all things, and they are with him always, cannot he without any Difficulty make our Prayers known to them?

Prot. We question not Gods power, but why should he do this since you pray to them without his Direction, and by doing so accuse the Way which he prescribed of being insuf-

insufficient, nor have you any Promise that God will acquaint them with your Prayers. Besides, you cannot but think it absurd, if not ridiculous, to pray to the Saints to pray to God for you, and yet till God tell them first, they cannot tell him what it is they are to desire of him; this is to employ God to inform the Saints of our Wants, and looks like writing to a Courtier which cannot read, to desire him to beg a Favour of the King for us, because we were unworthy to write immediately to the King, and yet knew before hand this Courtier must go to the King himself to read the Letter.

Po. **We value not your idle Comparisons; Our Church tells us the Saints do hear us, and it is no matter whether or no we know how they do hear us.**

Prot. The Scripture tells you they do not hear you, and Reason tells you they cannot, and will you believe your Church against both? Your Church never durst define the way how they come to hear you, because many Absurdities follow upon all methods that ever yet were devised: And a wary man would scarce credit a thing of this Consequence that cannot be proved or made out; much less would he go to Mediators, of whose hearing him he can have no other assurance than the bare word of those Men who gain by the Doctrin, when he hath an All-sufficient Mediator, who he is sure can

always hear and help him, and to whom he may pray without any Doubts to damp his Devotion.

The Worſhip of the Bleſſed Virgin.

Po. **Did not the Virgin Mary propheſie, that all Generations ſhould call her Bleſſed,** Luke 1. 48. **and have we not reaſon to believe that the Mother of God hath great power in Heaven?**

Prot. We call her *Bleſſed*, and bleſs God for her; but ſhe never ſaid, All Generations ſhould pray to her, or impertinently repeat that Salutation, which was proper to the occaſion of her Conception of Chriſt, as if it were a formal Prayer to her now: Nor is there one word in Scripture to direct us to pray to her at all; much leſs to ſay more *Ave*'s to her, than *Pater Noſters* to God, and to make larger Offerings to her than to Jeſus, who declares he hath all power in Heaven and Earth; ſo that all your worſhip of her is an Invention of your own, and meer Superſtition.

Po. **We find it makes the People more devout, to propoſe ſo many glorified Saints to them to be adored, than if we confined them to adore only one inviſible God.**

Prot. You may obſerve, if you would own the Truth, that this impious Device makes the Worſhip of God to be neglected, inclining your People to rely more on the Saints help than on Gods, and to give them the honour

honour due to him for those Blessings which he alone bestows on them; and since God hath confined us *only to worship and serve him*, *Matth.* 4. 10. it is Superstition and Idolatry, not Devotion, for to make any other Beings the Objects of your Worship.

The Adoration of Relicks.

Po. Well, but since God hath wrought so many Miracles by the Relicks of the Saints, doubtless he is well pleased with our adoring them and their Relicks.

Prot. There have been many false Relicks proposed for true ones, and many forged Miracles invented by cunning Priests for Gain, as hath been undeniably proved; and if there be any true Relicks of real Saints, and any certain Miracles, it is not the Saint or his Relicks, but God (by whose power the Miracle was wrought, as S. *Peter* tells us, *Acts* 3. 12.) who is to have the glory: And though we find in Scripture that Miracles were wrought by *Moses* Rod, *Elijahs* Mantle, the Hem of Christs Garment, S. *Peters* Shadow, and S. *Pauls* Handkerchief; we never read that any of the Faithful adored these things.

Po. **Perhaps you have been told, we wholly neglect making Prayers to God by Christ Jesus; whereas we have many Prayers in our Publick Offices like yours, directed to God in Christs Name, and I hope you have no Objection against these.**

Prot. You ought to have no other Prayers but such; and yet though these Prayers be right as to their Matter, there is one intolerable Fault in them all, that they are made in *Latin*, which the People do not understand.

Divine Service in an unknown Tongue.

Po. **Is not the Church to direct in what manner Publick Prayers shall be made, and are we not to obey her Orders?**

Prot. No doubtless, not where your Church expressly contradicts God and his holy Apostle. The Spirit of God by S. *Paul* commands Men to pray with understanding, and forbids any to use an unknown Tongue in Christian Assemblies, enjoyning the Priest so to make his Prayers and Praises, that the most unlearned may joyn in them, be edified by them, and say *Amen* to them, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 14, 15, 16, 17, and 26. and your Church bids men pray without understanding, and prescribes an unknown Tongue for the Priest to Pray and Praise God in, wherein the People cannot joyn, and whereby they are not edified, yea, to which they cannot with understanding, say *Amen*: In such a case to obey the Church is to disobey God, and a great Impiety.

Po. **You must know** Latin **was the Language of the ancient Christians at** Rome, **and we have not altered our Prayers, but only kept them in that Tongue in which they were made at first by the Apostles, who planted our Church.**

Prot.

Prot. Now you have yielded the Cauſe, for if the Apoſtles who were *Jews*, did not ſet up the *Hebrew* Prayers at *Rome*, but *Latin*, becauſe that was the Language which the People then underſtood: if you were of their Spirit, or followed their Steps, you ought now to turn them into other Languages, becauſe the People do not underſtand *Latin*, and becauſe it is neceſſary they ſhould pray with underſtanding. Is this your Apoſtolical Church which acts contrary to the Writings and Example of the Apoſtles, or could the Apoſtles leave you any Tradition to contradict their own Commands and Practice?

Po. **May not the People think of God and good things, and ſo be very Devout at theſe Prayers, though they do not underſtand the words?**

Prot. They may think of God and good things at home, and ſo need not come to the Publick Service at all, if this be ſufficient: We think Publick Prayers were deſigned for the People to come and unite their particular and hearty Deſires to the Petitions made by the Prieſt; and this praying with one Accord, *Acts* i. 14. makes them more prevalent than private Prayer, *S. Matth.* xviii. 20. But your People are thinking of one thing when the Prieſt is ſaying another, and cannot deſire the particular things asked by the Prieſt, becauſe they do not know them: So that this turns the publick Prayers into private, and the Prieſt might

might as well pray without a Congregation.

Po. **It is to God we ſpeak in Prayer, and ſince he underſtands us, it is no matter whether the People underſtand them or no.**

Prot. By this Argument you need not Pray at all, becauſe God knows your Neceſſities before you ask: Yet he bids us ask, that by the words of our Prayers we may ſtir up our Deſires, exerciſe our Devotion, and excite our Faith, not that we may inſtruct him. Wherefore your People are robbed of all that Comfort and Benefit which ours find ſo ſenſibly in our *Engliſh* Prayers, meerly becauſe your Church ſcorns to Reform any thing; and you can never expect that thoſe who by Experience have found the Sweetneſs and Advantage of our Pious and plain Liturgy, will endure your dry, unprofitable *Latin* Prayers.

Po. **Well, but ſome of your People think Sermons the main thing in Publick Worſhip, and we hope to gain them however, becauſe we Preach in** Engliſh.

Prot. Poſſibly ſome of theſe may be catch't by this Bait; but all wiſe Proteſtants will ask you why there is not as much reaſon for the People to know what they are to ſpeak to God, as what the Prieſt is to ſpeak to them; and will alſo deſire to know, why you ſhould read the Pſalms and Leſſons, and other Parts of Scripture in *Latin*, which God writ for our Learning and Inſtruction, 1 *Cor.* x. 11. and

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so make it as impossible the People should learn any thing from it, or be instructed by it, as for Boys in Horn-Books to be made any wiser by reading a *Latin* Author to them.

Po. I have told you before, This is lest the People should wrest the Scriptures, if they were in a Language they understood.

Prot. Why then do you preach in *English*? May they not wrest your Sermons, as well as Holy Scripture? Is there more danger now than in the Apostles times? Or is your Church wiser than they? Did not they write it in a Language generally understood? And was it not soon after turned into *Latin*, because the *Romans* best understood that Language? Did they not deliver it to all, and command all to Read it and Search it, to Meditate on it and Teach it to their Children? Though some are Gluttons and Drunkards, we must not deny all men the use of Meat and Drink; nor would you thus keep the Scriptures from the People, but only for fear that such plain Men as I should discover your Corruptions.

Po. Methinks you should discover your own Corruptions there: For what is more plainly exprest in Scripture than these words concerning the Sacrament of the Altar, This is my Body, *Luke* xxii. 19. **and yet you will not own the real Flesh of Christ to be there; Is not this to deny Christ's words and disbelieve the Scriptures?** Transubstantiation.

Prot.

Prot. We may as well charge you with denying Christs words, and disbelieving Scripture, since you affirm his real Blood to be there, though he tells us, *This Cup is the new Testament in my Blood, Luk.* xxii. 20. 1 *Cor.* xi. 25. You must confess there is a Figure in this Expression, or else you must affirm the Wine is Transubstantiated into the New Testament; and if there be a Figure in one Verse, why may there not be one also in the other, in regard this substantial Change which you pretend, is either in both parts, or in neither?

Po. **However we have much the advantage of you, because we take the Literal sense, which is both the more common and the more easie sense, whilst you are forced to fly to Tropes and Figures.**

Prot. You must consider this Sacrament is a Mystery, and in discoursing of Mysteries, it is more common in Scripture to speak Figuratively than Literally; yea, what is more usual there, than to call the Sign by the name of the thing signified, and the thing signified by the name of the Sign? So the *Rock* is said *to be Christ*, 1 *Cor.* x. 4. and *Christ* is said *to be Bread*, *John* vi. 48. yet none are so absurd to say, the *Rock* is substantially changed into *Christ*, or *Christ* into *Bread*: And when the Church is called, *The Body of Christ*, *Colos.* i. 24. your selves do not affirm that there is any change made of the Church into Christs Flesh and Blood, though there be more said

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of this than of the Sacramental Bread, *viz. That we are Members of his Body, of his Fleſh, and of his Bones, Epheſ.* v. 30. So when Chriſt is called a *Vine*, a *Door*, a *Way*, a *Branch*, *&c.* it is very certain the Expreſſions are Figurative, and there are a thouſand places in the Holy Bible which cannot be otherwiſe underſtood.

Po. **Well, but the Literal ſenſe is not to be left, unleſs where the words cannot be taken otherwiſe than Figuratively, which is not the caſe here.**

Prot. Yes, that is the very caſe here; for the Literal ſenſe is impoſſible and full of Contradictions, but the Figurative is natural, plain and eaſie: For if we take theſe words Literally, Chriſt's Body was whole and ſitting at the Table, and broken into pieces on the Table at the ſame time; it muſt be entire now in Heaven, and yet all of it in ten thouſand different and diſtant places on the Earth. We muſt believe the Subſtance of Fleſh hath none of its proper Accidents, and that the Accidents of Bread can ſubſiſt without their proper ſubſtance: We muſt think that to be real Fleſh and Blood, which we ſee, ſmell, taſte and feel to be real Bread and Wine: We muſt believe there is a Miracle, when all our Senſes which are Witneſſes to all other Miracles, give Evidence there is no Miracle at all here. In ſhort, we muſt contradict our Reaſon, and deny our Senſes without any need, unleſs it

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be to uphold an unintelligible Literal sense, when the Figurative is far more plain.

Po. **'Tis strange how Prejudice may blind Men; surely you cannot be in earnest when you say, a Figurative Speech is plainer than a Speech without a Figure: This only shews how desperate your Cause is, which drives you to these Absurdities.**

Prot. I will prove it is no Absurdity to maintain, that in this case the Figurative sense is easier: For that is the easiest sense of any words, which the Mind first apprehends when we hear them: For Example, If one point to an House and Land, and say, *This is my Estate*, there the plain sense is the Literal sense; But if one hold a Writing sealed in his Hand, and say, *This is my Estate*, the easiest and plainest sense then is, *This is that which conveys my Estate, and all the Benefits of it to me*: So if Christ had pointed to himself sitting at Table, and said, *This is my Body*, the Apostles would, and we must have taken it Literally: but since he points to Bread, and saith, *This is my Body*; the first and most natural Sense of the words is, *This is that which signifies my Body, and communicates all the Benefits of my Incarnation and Passion to you:* and thus S. *Paul* expresly doth expound it when he saith, it is *the Communion of his Body and Blood*, 1 *Cor.* x. 16.

Po. **What then do you believe that Christ**

Christ is in this Sacrament no otherwise but in a bare Figure and empty Sign?

Prot. We believe that Christ is here verily and indeed taken and received by the Faithful, and really present as to the Effects and Benefits of his Passion; but this presence though it be real, yet is spiritual and apprehended by Faith, not corporal and substantial, because then it must be discerned by sense.

Po. **From one Absurdity granted many will follow, and your absurd Exposition forces you to hold this ridiculous Assertion, That a Spiritual Presence is a real Presence.**

Prot. Dare you seriously deny this, which you call a ridiculous Assertion? Is not Christ really with his Church to the end of the World by his Spiritual Presence? Is not the Holy Ghost really with every Regenerate Man by his Spiritual Presence? The Effects and Benefits of Christ's Death, which we seek in this Sacrament are Spiritual, such as Pardon, Peace, Grace, and hopes of Glory, yet they are very real, and therefore we think it fittest to expect them in a Spiritual manner, especially since our Lord hath told us, *It is the Spirit that quickneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing*, *John* vi. 63. And the Apostle saith, *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*, *Heb.* xi. 1. That is, It makes things invisible and Spiritual to be very real to the true Believer.

Po.

Po. I find you delight much in calling this Spiritual Meat and Drink, **but would gladly understand how you dare do so, without any Authority of Scripture, yea when the Scripture saith, Christ will give us his Flesh to Eat,** *John.* vi. 53.

Prot. We have good Authority of Scripture for this, *viz.* 1 *Cor.* x. 3, 4. Where it is said that the *Israelites* had the priviledge by certain Signs to Eat and Drink into Christ as well as we, in a mystical way: For *they did all Eat of the same Spiritual Meat, and did all Drink of the same Spiritual Drink: For they Drank of that Spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ:* We see it was Spiritual Meat and Drink which they had, yet it was the same with ours, and therefore ours must be Spiritual Meat and Drink too. Again, we are not said, *All to Drink into one Blood,* but *into one Spirit,* 1 *Cor.* xii. 13. Nor can we understand how St. *Paul* could call that which is the Communion of Christs Body, by the Name of Bread after Consecration, 1 *Cor.* xi. 26, 27, 28. If the outward part did not remain unchanged in substance, though its use be changed, and our Souls are certainly fed here, yet these are not capable of feeding either on Bread or Flesh; Yea our Lord himself teaches us to Expound those Words in St. *John* of a Spiritual Communication, of his Body, for he saith, *The words he speaks to us are Spirit and Life, John.* vi. 63.

Po.

Po. **You do but prevaricate when you pretend to believe Christ is really present in the Sacrament; for if you truly believed this, you would give Divine Worship to the Host as we do.**

Prot. We bend our Knees, address our Prayers, and give Divine Worship to Christ, who is really present to our Faith in this Sacrament: But since we are sure that the outward part is not changed in nature, but only in use and signification, and doth still remain Bread, we dare not give Divine Worship to that which is a Creature, since it would be Idolatry so to do.

Po. **Well, I will inform you of one very ill consequence of your denying Christs Flesh and Blood to be substantially in this Sacrament; that is, you make it to be only a Commemoration of the Sacrifice on the Cross; but we give it far more Honour, believing it to be a Propitiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of Quick and Dead.**

Prot. Neither you nor we ought to make the Sacrament what we please, we must take our Notions of it from Scripture and from Christ, who instituted it, and he bids us *Do this in Remembrance of him, Luk.* xxii. 19. And S. *Paul* doth not say *it is the Lords Death,* but *the shewing forth of his Death,* 1 *Cor.* xi. 26. Yea he makes this the main difference between the Legal Sacrifices and that of Christ on the Cross, that they were often Offered,

but he was only to be Offered once, and by that one Offering hath perfectly ſatisfied for the Sins of the whole World, *Hebr.* ix. 25, 26, And Chap. x. 14. So that this Sacrament is certainly a Commemoration, as we ſay, but it cannot be a Sacrificing of Chriſt again, as you ſay, if we refer the matter (as we ought) to be judged by Scripture; wherein there is nothing to ſhew that is a Propitiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of the Living, much leſs for the Sins of the Dead, whoſe eſtate can never be altered after this Life, *Luk.* xvi. 26, 28. But as they fall they muſt lye for ever, *Eccleſ.* xi. 3.

Po. The World may now ſee, how unjuſtly you brag of your Magnifying the Merit of Chriſts Paſſion, and how falſly you accuſe us of diminiſhing and diſparaging it; Since we hold it ſufficient to pardon both Quick and Dead, and you deny it can do any good to the Dead.

Prot. It is not for want of Merit in Chriſts Paſſion, but for want of Capacity in thoſe who have not Repented in their Life Time, that hinders theſe Deceaſed Perſons from receiving the Benefits of Chriſts Death; Chriſt hath declared he will pardon none but them that do repent; and if Men do not repent before they die, they cannot repent afterwards, and ſo cannot receive any Benefit of Chriſts Paſſion; and if living Men be taught, they may get a Pardon after Death,

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it will encourage them to put off their Repentance to the very last: Nor would so false a Doctrin without any ground in Scripture ever have been taught in your Church, but only that the crafty Inventers of it found, it would make Masses sell at dear Rates.

Po. **You are very free of your Censures, but we despise them, being assured our Doctrins and Practises are the true sense of Scripture, as it is interpreted to us by the Holy Catholick Church.**

Prot. Do you really think so? Pray then before we leave this Subject, will you tell me, How the making only some (that is, the Priests) to Drink of the Cup, can possibly be the true meaning of Christs Words, *Drink ye all of this, Matth.* xxvi. 27. Half-Communion; or denying the Cup to the Laity.

Po. **Why, it is plain the Apostles were Priests and not Lay-Men, and it was only to the Apostles that Christ spake these Words; and though we forbid the People to Drink of this Cup, yet we Command the Priests to do it.**

Prot. Was it not also only to the Apostles that Christ said then, *Take, Eat, this is my Body, ver.* 26. and it will not follow by your way of arguing, that none but Priests must Eat of the Bread, and that the People must receive neither Bread nor Wine? You know the Apostles stood then in the place of Lay-Men and represented the Congregation, as Christ did the Priest, so that *S. Paul* plainly applies

to the People, the Commands both of Eating and Drinking, which Christ gave at first only to his Apostles. And nothing is more evident, than that all the People at *Corinth* did Drink of the Cup, and some of them too largely, 1 *Cor.* x. 21. Chap. xi. 21. and *ver.* 27, 28, 29. Chap. xii. 13. So that I wonder how you dare call the contradicting Christs Commands and the Precepts and Practice of the Apostles, the true sense of Scripture, and why you rob the People of one half of the Sacrament.

The Doctrine of Concomitancy; or the Blood always accompanying the Body.

Po. **We rob them of nothing, because we declare we give them whole Christ, which is contained fully under either Species.**

Prot. This is no more than if one who clipt off half the Kings Coin, should say it was still current Money: The very Declaration it self supposes that our Lord instituted two Species when one was sufficient, and so to excuse your selves of Impiety, you accuse him of doing things in vain: And since Christ is here set out as having suffered for Sin, and so his Blood separated from his Body, we cannot imagine how the Bread alone should be sufficient to set forth this Mystery.

Po. **There is danger lest we should spill the Cup in giving it to the People, and lest it should be profaned by the rude Mouths of Lay-men.**

Prot.

Prot. This danger may be in giving it to the Priests; however you are not of S. *Pauls* Mind, who when the Cup was abused at *Corinth* even to excess, durst not alter Christs Institution, nor take it wholly away as you do, thereby committing a grievous Sacriledge in keeping back part of that whereof God hath made you Dispensers, and as much as in you lyes, depriving the People of the Benefit of Christs Blood.

Po. **We can find more fault with your preparation for it, than you with our dispensing of it; for why do not you all go to a Priest to confess your Sins before you do receive, as the Scripture doth appoint?**

Auricular Confession, or that which is privately whispered into the Ear of the Priest.

Prot. The Scripture appoints every Man *shall examine himself before he Eat of that Bread and Drink of that Cup*, 1 *Cor.* xi. 28. Now of this you say very little, but our Church strictly enjoyns all thus to prepare: But Scripture no where appoints it as necessary for all to go to a Priest and confess before every act of receiving.

Po. **Doth not Scripture declare that penitent Sinners confessed their Sins to a Priest,** Matth. iii. 6. Acts. xix. 8. **And command us to confess our faults one to another,** James v. 16. **and can there be any fitter time to do this than just before we Communicate?**

Prot. We do not forbid Men at any time to Confeſs to a Prieſt, but adviſe them to it, in caſe of a troubled Mind, or a violent Temptation, and eſpecially if that be their condition who are to receive the Sacrament: But we dare not lay ſuch a Snare on our People, as to make this always neceſſary, ſince God hath not declared it is ſo. And thoſe Examples you bring, concern Publick Confeſſion of Sins before the Prieſt and the Congregation; and ſo doth that place in S. *James*, for it orders us to Confeſs not to the Righteous Man alone, but one to another, that ſo the Righteous Man and all the reſt may pray for Mercy for the Penitent; and I have heard this was the Primitive way of Confeſſing Sins, and is ſtill here in our Church, where the offences are ſcandalous, and the Party cenſured: But this is no ground for your Private Confeſſing into the Prieſts Ear, and ſo getting an Abſolution of courſe at Set times.

Prieſtly Abſolution.

Po. Hath not Chriſt granted to the Prieſts a power to remit mens Sins, or retain them, John xx. 23. and muſt not the Judge who is to condemn or ſet free, of neceſſity hear all the Particulars concerning the Criminal?

Prot. Our Prieſts will not grant us Abſolution in particular Caſes, unleſs we do ſo far confeſs the Crimes we are guilty of, as to ſhew our ſelves truly penitent; but they do not

not compel us under pain of Damnation to come and tell them all our Sins, which Scripture ſaith is impoſſible, *Pſal.* xix. 12. Nor doth the Kings granting a Commiſſion to certain Judges, to hear and to determine Cauſes, oblige thoſe who can make up their Differences among themſelves, to come and be tried before them. Beſides, the Prieſt is not the higheſt and laſt Judge, nor can he infallibly tell when he doth hear all that Men ſay of themſelves, whether they be Hypocrites, or true Penitents; and therefore we are adviſed to confeſs all our Sins daily to God the Supreme Judge, and to labour to prove our Repentance to be ſincere to him by amending our Lives: And we are not obliged to go to a Prieſt, but in weighty Caſes, and on great Occaſions.

Satisfaction, or Pennances.

Po. **This is one great Complaint we have againſt your pretended Reformation, that you do not oblige Sinners to make any ſatisfaction for their Offences, and have laid aſide the Sacrament of Pennance.**

Prot. We do account it neceſſary for notorious and ſcandalous Offenders to do a publick Pennance, that their Shame and Sorrow may be as evident as their Crimes, and this they are to do for Satisfaction to the Church, 2 *Cor.* ii. 7. And we hold it neceſſary in more ſecret Sins, that the Sinner do heartily bewail them, humbly confeſs them to God, and

utterly forsake them for the time to come: and upon these terms we doubt not God will forgive them for Christs sake, according to his Promises in Holy Scripture, *Prov.* xxviii. 13. *Ezek.* xviii. 21. and we will trust Gods Word sooner than yours.

Po. **But after God hath pardoned the Sinner as to the eternal Punishment due to him, which Christ bought off, He must satisfie the Divine Justice for Temporal Pains still remaining due to those Sins, by submitting to the Pennances laid on him by his Priest.**

Prot. This is a meer Device of your own, not grounded on Holy Scripture; for there it is declared, that Christ hath delivered us from all the Curse due to us, and saved us to the uttermost, and cleansed us from all Sin, and made our Peace; so that if we have Interest in him there is no Condemnation to us. 'Tis true, God may and doth sometimes chastise good Men, after he resolves to pardon them, 2 *Sam.* xii. 14. which is not to satisfie his Justice, but to warn them not easily to run into the like Offences, *Heb.* xii. 6. And true Penitents have voluntarily put on Sackcloth, and lain in Ashes, and Fasted and Prayed, &c. But this was to shew the sincerity of their Repentance, and the reality of their Sorrow for offending God, or to make themselves more fit to pray earnestly for the averting the Divine Displeasure: But Gods

Word

Word never makes these Acts any part of Satisfaction to God, nor do we find one Precedent of Christ, or his Holy Apostles, enjoyning such Acts purely to satisfie Gods Justice for any remaining Punishment.

Po. **Well, you cannot deny it is more for the honour of Gods Justice to enjoyn the Offenders to make him some satisfaction, rather than to teach them he will freely forgive; and you must grant it is more likely to restrain men from future Crimes, if they suffer in Body or Goods for those that are past.**

Prot. But it is not much for Gods Honour, that when your Church pretends God will not remit these remaining temporal Pains without men do their Pennance; yet she will remit the Pennance it self for a certain Price, and so Money will buy off that which you say Christs Death doth not satisfie for: And indeed none but the Poor almost do any Pennance with you; the Rich, who can gratifie the Priest well, are Absolved and Indulged, and however you order it in your Church, there are as many notorious and customary Sinners for all these Pennances and Payments, as any where else: yea, they sin with less fear and regret than others, because they foresee a Pilgrimage, or a little Fasting, a few Lashes, or a Sum of Money, will make their Peace with the Priest, and so they take little Care by a sincere Amend-

Amendment to make their Peace with God.

Indulgences.

Po. I suppose you reflect upon our Indulgences, which are no other than the use of that Power of remitting Sins which Christ gave to S. Peter, and in him to the Chief Pastor of the Catholick Church; and doubtless it is a most comfortable thing when S. Peters Successor, or his Delegates, do so solemnly declare us clear from those Sins we have confessed.

Prot. S. Peter never sold this Power, *Acts* viii. 18. for he affirms, *We are not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold*, 1 *Pet.* i. 8. Had he used the same gainful Trade which the Pope drives, he could not have said, *Silver and Gold have I none*, *Acts* iii. 6. So that you must not mention that holy Apostle as your Patron, till you follow his Example, and grant Pardons to none but them, that upon a strict Search are found truly Penitent; and upon these terms (which Christ makes necessary) the Poor must have them as soon as the Rich, and both freely: But while your Church makes a meer Merchandize of them, and grants them out to raise Money to enrich a Nephew, to marry a Niece of the Popes, or to aggrandize a Favourite, and sends them into remote Countries to Men and Women whose Faces he never saw, and of whose Penitence he hath no assurance, we Protestants must look on

on them as a holy Cheat, a hindrance of true Repentance, and a trick to get Money.

Po. You are quite mistaken; the Church designs nothing by these Indulgences but the Penitents Salvation; the Money is a voluntary Offering, and can you blame Holy Church for receiving the Oblations of the People?

Prot. It is no Crime to receive voluntary Oblations, provided they be dispensed to the Poor: But here is a certain Price set, and the Money received goes in part to the Popes Coffers, and in part to the wealthy Delegates, or to rich Monasteries; and it appears that Money is the main thing, because Poor men cannot get them, nor will they give an Indulgence freely to the Indigent, though never so Penitent; whereas the Rich, that shew little signs of true Repentance, may have them, and are thereby hardned in their Sins. Nor is it this Point alone, but most of those Disputed between us and you, that are stiffly Defended on your Part, because they advance the Wealth and Power of your Church; Such is the Popes Power to Receive Appeals, Images, Relicks, Saying Masses to deliver Souls, Confession, Penances, and two more not yet mentioned, *viz.*, Purgatory, and the pretended Sanctity of your Religious Orders.

Po-

Po. **'Tis not the Advantage we have by these Doctrins, but the certain Truth of them, which makes us so desirous you should believe them, as appears in this Article of Purgatory, which I shall prove first by Scripture, and then by Reason, to be a great Truth.**

Purgatory.

Prot. The Scripture declares very often and very plainly, that there are two places of eternal Rewards and Punishments, *Heaven* and *Hell*; and if there be any Third place to which most Men are to go, to suffer very great temporary Pains, I doubt not but God hath revealed it as plainly and clearly as he hath done Heaven and Hell, and therefore let me see you prove it by plain Texts of Holy Scripture.

Po. **Our Saviour saith**, The Sin against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven, neither in this World, nor in the World to come, *Matth.* xii. 32. **which plainly supposes some Sins not pardoned here, may be forgiven there; and that is one ground of** Purgatory.

Prot. This is far from a clear Proof, for here is no mention of *Purgatory*; and this Phrase, *The World to come*, in the Gospel often signifies the Days of the *Messiah*, *Heb.* xi. 5. and vi. 5. And the *Jews* expected that *Messiah* (whom they believed as yet not come) should pardon diverse great Sins, which could not be expiated by Legal Sacrifices; and there-

therefore Christ speaking to them in their own Phrase, tells them, This Sin against the *Holy Ghost* should never be pardoned under the Law, nor under the Gospel. But suppose this Phrase do signifie, *The next World*: Christ says not any other Sins shall be forgiven there, but only that this Sin shall never be forgiven there nor here, which is only a Phrase to set out it shall not be forgiven at all: So *Gen.* xxxi. 24. to speak *neither good nor bad*; signifies, to say nothing at all.

Po. **Doth not** S. Paul say, Every Mans work shall be made manifest, for the Day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by Fire, and the Fire shall try every Mans work of what sort it is: **And a little after**, If a Mans work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by Fire, 1 *Cor.* iii. 13, 15. **Is not this a clear Proof of Purgatory-Fire?**

Prot. This place speaks only of Teachers, and the Persons are not to be burnt, but their Works, that is, the False Doctrins which any of them Teach; and the whole place is Metaphorical and obscure; and that last Phrase of *being saved, but so as by Fire*, is no more but a way of expressing a thing that shall be done with great Difficulty, *Psal.* lxvi. 12. *Zech.* iii. 2. So that you may as well pretend Sinners are in Purgatory here, because we are commanded *to save them with fear, pulling*

pulling them out of the Fire, Jude, ver. 23. And if this place be to be understood Literally, it must be referred to that Fire which shall burn all the World at the Day of Judgment, which (I have been told) is that which the Fathers understand by the *Day* and the *Fire* here mentioned, and so it hath no relation to Purgatory, which you must either prove (as we do Heaven and Hell) from clearer places than this, or we shall not believe it.

Po. **We have** S. Peter **also on our side, who tells us,** That Christ went by the Spirit to Preach to the Spirits in Prison, which sometimes were Disobedient, when once the Long-suffering of God waited in the Days of *Noah*, while the Ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight Persons were saved by Water, 1 *Pet.* iii. 19, 20.

Prot. This place is obscurer than any of the former, and so very unfit to build an Article of Faith upon: But the plainest Sense of it is, That Christ by his Spirit in *Noah* did Preach to those Wicked ones before the Flood, whose Souls and Spirits were as it were Imprisoned in their Bodies; and those who were saved by this Preaching were but a few, and those were saved by Water, and not by Fire. And as far as we can gather from this Text, and 2 *Pet.* ii. 3, 5. these Persons who were Preached to, remained

mained Disobedient, and were not saved at all; so that you have no shadow of ground to fix *Purgatory* on this place.

Po. What think you of that Prison into which if we be cast by God, who is the Sinners Adversary, they shall by no means come out thence till they have paid the uttermost Farthing, *Matth.* v. 26. Is not this Purgatory?

Prot. I think it is nothing to your purpose, for Christ useth it as an Argument why we should Repent and make our Peace with God while we live; whereas Purgatory gives Men Pretences to put off their Repentance till Death, and fills them with false Hopes to be delivered afterwards: And out of this Prison there is no means to be delivered, but by the Persons own satisfying the whole Debt, whereas you think the Prayers and Alms of others may get Men out of Purgatory: Nor doth the Text say, that the Sufferer can pay the utmost Farthing, but rather suppose it impossible, and so his lying there *till he pay the utmost Farthing*, must be meant of his lying in Hell for ever. And Christ mentions *Hell* in that Chapter, *ver.* 22, 29, 30. But there is no word of *Purgatory* here, or any where in Scripture, and therefore pray try if you can prove it from Reason, since Gods Word is not for you.

Po.

Po. Is there not great difference between some Sins and others? And if God be a Righteous Judge, he will make different Punishments: So that it is very reasonable to believe that Venial Sins shall only be punished with temporary Fire, not with eternal Flames.

Prot. If we consider the Holiness of the Law, or the infiniteness of the Majesty offended, all Sin, even the least, deserves Damnation as is just Wages, *Rom.* vi. 23. and the least Sin unrepented of may prove Mortal, because it is not so much (now under the Gospel) the Sin, as the final Impenitence, which Damns Men; and he that will not repent, shews he would Eternally Sin; so that whatever the instance be, he deserves Eternal Damnation: Yet alas! no Man that repents not fully while he lives, is only guilty of these lesser Sins, which in such persons never go alone, they are always guilty of greater Sins, which merit Eternal Flames. And that place of S. *John* on which you ground your distinction of Mortal and Venial Sin, speaks of the event of Mens Sins, not of the nature of them; So that if we see Men sin without any Signs or Hope of their Repentance, he doth not oblige us to pray for such, 1 *John* v. 16.

Po. But is it not said, that nothing which is unclean shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven? Rev. xxi. 27. Wherefore reason teacheth, that they who are defiled with

with any Sins, even those that are Venial must be Purged e're they can come into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Prot. Surely poor Catholics are hardly used, to pay so much Money, and endure so many Pennances on pretence of purging away their Venial Sins; and yet after all their Fastings, Whipping, and Pilgrimages, their Absolutions, Holy Water, Alms and Extreme Unction, still they are to endure a Torment as grievous, though not as long, as Hell Fire, for these light Transgressions: Besides, we cannot imagine how Fire can purge a Soul unbodyed, nor why Purgatory should be needful to cleanse us from some Sins, when Scripture declares, *the Blood of Christ cleanseth us from all Sin*, 1 *John* i. 7. Or how Men who are to be saved by Christ should be condemned to Purgatory, when St. *Paul* saith, *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*, *Rom.* viii. 1. 'Tis evident, it hugely derogates from Gods Mercy and Christs Merits, to teach Men, That after all Gods Promises *to justify us freely by his Grace*, Rom. iii. 24. And after Christs *blotting out the Hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us*, *Coloss.* ii. 14. they must still smart so long and so severely, and are left to pay so great a part of it themselves.

Po. **You are mistaken again, for we hold, that because of the Communion of Saints, one man may satisfy for another, and that the Alms and Prayers of the Living, and**

especially of Holy Fryers and Nuns, will avail, for the delivering the Dead out of Purgatory.

Prot. You may hold what you please, but Scripture tells us, *Every one shall bear his own Burden*, Galat. vi. 5. and, *that no Man can redeem his Brother, nor make agreement to God for him, because it cost more to redeem their Souls, so that he must let that alone for ever*, *Psal.* xlix. 7, 8. And that all the good Works of the best Men are little enough for themselves, *Matth.* xxv. 9. So that we wonder the wise Lay-men will be deluded by a Doctrin which is so ill proved, and tends so Apparently to make the People put off their Repentance till their Death, and to give the Monks an opportunity to draw Legacies from the dying, and large Gifts from their living Friends, that is, to make the Laity wicked and the Clergy Rich, and to hazard the Salvation of both.

The Sanctity of Religious Orders.

Po. We do not think the Money ill bestowed which we give to our Priests and Fryers, whose Prayers are more pure and prevalent than those of your Clergy, because they are under those three Holy Vows of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience.

Prot. Vows without observing them are but a snare and an aggravation of the Sin, when they are broken, as two of these most notoriously are by your Priests and Religious Orders, who are infamous in all Countries for those Artifices they use to get Wealth, and for

their

their unnatural and ſcandalous Luſt, and your Church is juſtly taxed with all the infamous Conſequences of the Vow of Chaſtity, becauſe ſhe impoſes it on young Perſons before they know their own ſtrength, and connives at Fornication in them rather than ſhe will allow them to marry, that the Church may be their Heir, and that they may have leſs dependance on Kings and States, as being ſingle Perſons.

Po. You would fain make this a piece of Policy, whereas it is Religion; for S. Paul declares, ſingle perſons are fitteſt to wait upon the Lord without diſtraction, 1 Cor. vii. 35. and on that account it is moſt proper for the Religious and Prieſts.

Prot. The Apoſtle adviſes all Chriſtians (and not Prieſts only) to continue ſingle if they were ſo, as beſt for thoſe Times of Perſecution, and provided they found they could live Chaſtly Unmarried, otherwiſe to avoid Fornication he Commands them even then to Marry, 1 *Cor.* vii. 2. Whereas you forbid it to all your Religious in all Times and all Caſes: Beſides, he laid no Vow upon them *ver.* 35. Nor was he himſelf under any Vow but was free to Marry if he had pleaſed, 1 *Cor.* ix. 5. And he allows a Biſhop to be the Husband of one Wife, 1 *Tim.* iii. 2. and ſuppoſes Deacons then had Wives, *ver.* 12. Nor doth he count Marriage impurity in any, but affirms, *It is honourable in all, and the Bed-*

Undefiled, *Hebr.* xiii. 4. he excepts not the Clergy, ſo that we doubt not our Married Clergy's Prayers who live ſoberly according to Gods Ordinance are more pure and prevalent than yours, moſt of which live in Perjury, burning Deſires and Fornication.

Exorciſms, or Caſting out Evil Spirits.

Po. But your Prieſts have not power by their Prayers to caſt out Evil Spirits, as ours have; which ſhews, that Ours, not yours, are the true Succeſſors of the Apoſtles, to whom Chriſt gave power over Unclean Spirits, Mark xvi. 17.

Prot. Chriſt gave his Apoſtles power then to drink Poyſon, and take up Serpents without Harm, as alſo afterwards to Speak with Tongues, Heal the Sick by a Touch, and Raiſe the Dead; yet your Prieſts dare not pretend to any of theſe Miracles, which are all ceaſed long ſince, 1 *Cor.* xii. 8. Only they keep up the Pretence to Caſt out Evil Spirits, becauſe that is more eaſily counterfeited than any of the reſt: And if this alone would ſerve, 'tis likely Conjurers might prove themſelves the Apoſtles Succeſſors, as well as your Prieſts; for they can Caſt out Evil Spirits better than the *Romiſh* Prieſts, who as may be noted, do Caſt out the Devil as often out of the ſame Party in diverſe places, as there is occaſion to make a Proſelyte, or work upon the Superſtitious. Now this muſt be done either by Compact with

with the Devil, or the Party pretended to be Poſſeſſed, and either way it is little to their Honour. Beſides, I have known a good Phyſician, by Natural Means, Cure thoſe whom theſe Prieſts pretended were Poſſeſſed, which ſhews they often caſt the Devil out when he was never in.

Po. **Well, I cannot but pity your Obſtinacy, and pray for you, who wilfully ſhut your Eyes againſt the plaineſt Arguments for Catholic Truth.** The Concluſion.

Prot. There is more Reaſon for me to pity and pray for you, who in all theſe Points do contradict Holy Scripture, which cannot deceive us, and believe falſe and feigned Traditions, invented by deſigning Men for Evil ends: and for my part, I count it a wiſe Reſolution, and no Obſtinacy, to give credit to God rather than Men.

Po. **You flatter your ſelf with Scripture taken in your own Senſe, but you did own the Catholic Church was the beſt Interpreter of Scripture; and I aſſure you the Holy Fathers, who in all Ages have delivered down to us the Senſe of the Catholic Church, agree exactly with us in all theſe Opinions and Practices which you Proteſtants reject; and can you think all theſe holy ancient Doctors were deceived, and that a few obſcure Modern Reformers are in the right?**

Prot. Truly, I have but little Skill in theſe

these Writings of the Fathers; but I have heard our Clergy (who are as well read in them as any of you) declare, That all these Fathers condemn your Opinions, as much as Holy Scripture doth, and that these Opinions and Practices were late Inventions of your Church, and were set up in Times of Ignorance and Superstition, meerly to gain Power and Wealth by them: And though I am not able to make this out, I promise you, whenever you please, to bring one of our Churchmen that shall prove what I say. In the mean time, because the Scripture was before the Fathers, I am well satisfied that mine is the oldest and the best Religion, and am resolved therefore by Gods Grace never to forsake it; and if you lov'd your own Soul above your Worldly Interest, you would embrace it also; which I heartily pray you may, and so bid you Farewell.

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